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POLITICAL SCIENCE

QUARTERLY

HOLLAND'S INTERNATIONAL POLICY¹

THE diplomatic history of Holland² since her resurrection in 1813, though following one consistent and clearly discernible line, may be divided into three distinct periods. If a league of nations is formed with the Kingdom of the Netherlands as a member, a fourth period in that history will open.

I

The one outstanding characteristic of Dutch foreign policy during the past hundred years will probably not seem unfamiliar to Americans. This is the extreme disinclination on the part of both the statesmen and the people of the Netherlands to meddle with the numerous and monotonous European intrigues about power, change of power, combination of power, balance of power. This is not to say that Holland has held aloof from international affairs if some higher international interest needed her support. After the United States, in 1803 and 1815, had successfully scourged the Algerian pirates, Holland, in conjunction with Great Britain, took an honorable part in a new repression of this piracy in 1816. In 1863, Holland cooperated with England, France and the United States against a hostile *daimio* in Japan,—a country which was first introduced to western civilization by the Dutch.

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² The name "Holland", by which the Kingdom of the Netherlands is popularly known, is here used interchangeably with the latter. In the same way "Dutch" and "Netherlands" are used interchangeably.

In 1900, Holland willingly joined in the action by eleven powers against China to maintain international law against the Boxer uprising; and in the same year the Netherlands government offered a man-of-war to President Kruger of the South African Republic, in order to transport that old and honored statesman, then at war with the superior force of Great Britain, from South Africa to Europe. But apart from such international cooperation or action, and apart from her cordial participation in many European congresses on international and colonial problems, Holland has pursued a policy of detachment from foreign entanglements. The atmosphere of jealousies, of rivalries, of disputes respecting power, which has so generally pervaded Europe, was not congenial to her; and although she never had a Washington to warn her against "entangling alliances," against a policy that seeks favorites and creates adversaries among foreign nations, the counsel of the Farewell Address was clearly written on the Dutch national mind. When the Netherlands government in April, 1908, signed the North Sea agreement with five other European powers, it took care to state expressly that this understanding involved no alliance; and when a few years afterwards rumors arose of a similar Pacific Ocean entente with Holland as a member, there was some fear in Dutch parliamentary circles lest the old and tried policy might be forgotten.

This Dutch policy of aloofness has not, of course, earned the praise of France, Great Britain or Germany. In order to be praised by them, it would have been necessary for Holland to fall in with the aims of their diplomacy. By maintaining her detachment, inspired by her peaceful inclinations and her distrust of policies of power, she has failed to gain partisans; and the honest dullness of her course, which even the civil war of 1830-1831 with the seceding Belgians, ending in the peace of 1839, hardly interrupted, has been criticised for its negative quality. The misunderstanding, misrepresentation and silence, which this foreign policy has often brought upon the country, could not be obviated even by the fact that Holland had organized and developed in the East Indies a splendid empire of fifty millions of inhabitants; that her engineers had con-

structed harbors in Chile; that her contractors had improved the rivers of China and the Suez Canal; and that, in view of her small population, her scientific men had won an unusually large number of Nobel prizes.

II

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, after the close of the Franco-German War, the scene began to change. A new trend developed in European policy. This was the tendency to substitute an international for a merely foreign policy, the tendency to promote common interests, to recognize and uphold the interdependence of nations. Such things move very slowly; but it is indispensable that some one should make a start and lead the way.

There is one great name in the recent history of Holland, bound up indissolubly with her joyful entrance into this disinterested new international policy of Europe—the name of Mr. Tobias M. C. Asser, lawyer, professor, privy councilor, delegate to both peace conferences at The Hague and to many other diplomatic congresses, member of The Hague Arbitration Court and arbitrator in several international disputes. He died in 1913. Holland's international, as distinguished from her national, resurrection is almost entirely attributable to him.

The Franco-German War ended in 1871. Almost immediately, in 1873, the Netherlands government tried to bring about an international conference on an important and difficult, but politically innocent, subject, which is represented in the United States by renowned authors of able works, the conflict of laws. This attempt failed. In 1884, Italy, guided by Mr. Asser's friend Mancini, made a similar effort, but in vain. In 1891, Holland tried again. This time Mr. Asser succeeded, and his success resulted in a series of Hague conferences on private international law. The effects were lasting and increasing, and in 1910 and 1912, when bills of exchange formed the subject of the conferences, the United States sent delegates. In 1911, the attitude and activities of the Dutch government were gracefully recognized by the United States, when it proposed

to make The Hague the seat of a new series of international conferences for the restriction of the use of opium.

Is not such work conducive to the benefit of the nations of the world and to better international relations? Undoubtedly it is. Does it stir the hearts and the minds of the mass of the population? Undoubtedly not. It creates an atmosphere of disinterestedness and of mutual understanding; it develops what President Butler of Columbia University has happily styled "the international mind"; but it directly appeals only to a small and limited, though important, circle of men of influence and high standing. It is the same with Holland's comprehensive arbitration treaties—the most advanced examples of the kind—with Denmark (1904), Italy (1909) and China (1915). Nor is the fact to be overlooked that Holland, in December, 1913, was the first European country to conclude (through the influence of her foreign minister, Jonkheer Loudon) a "Bryan treaty" for the advancement of peace. All of these treaties showed the progressive spirit of the Netherlands in international affairs, a spirit that was further manifested in Holland's adhesion, in 1912, to the international copyright convention of Berne. When the honorary doctor's degree was bestowed by the University of Leyden, on the eve of the opening of the Peace Palace (1913), upon four prominent promoters of international goodwill—Mr. Elihu Root being among them—the act met with general interest and general approval in the Netherlands.

Meanwhile, events had occurred bringing international problems to the very masses of the population and affecting the international policy not merely of governments but of nations. They came unexpectedly and for Holland had a twofold interest. In the first place there was the meeting of the peace conference at The Hague in May, 1899, a time of bright spring, of the peaceful mingling of the flags of many nations, of reviving hope and awakening idealism. The result was the establishment of the Arbitration Court at The Hague. But the sunshine of the picture soon faded away. The autumn of the same year, 1899, witnessed the outbreak of the Boer War, fought by Great Britain against two free, harmless, democratic nations of

Dutch stock in South Africa,—a war which, more deeply than any other modern war, even the present war included, struck and shook the whole Dutch nation and opened its eyes to the fatal deficiencies of the present international system, to its lack of impartiality and to the titanic problem of checking foreign aggression and international anarchy. The Boer War taught that even if a country complied strictly with international law and sought neither political nor economic paramountcy, it was, nevertheless, exposed to sudden aggressive war with all its numberless horrors. The first peace conference had neither found nor attempted to find a remedy.

In 1907, a second peace conference met. It was again disappointing. Its draft for an international court of justice at The Hague was not finished; its important international prize court was not accepted (1911) by England. It left the real peace problem, the real disarmament problem, the real problem of maintaining and enforcing international law, exactly as they were before. These problems were decorated with nice flowers of eloquence and of rhetoric, and thus smothered, were put in cold storage to await a third peace conference, to be held at The Hague, eight years later, in 1915.

III

Here lies the beginning, for Holland at least, of an era of new international thought. After the disappointment of the second conference, Holland took the problems of international organization in hand. The problem of how to maintain international law and secure impartial peace has been incessantly discussed in Dutch magazines, Dutch editorials and pamphlets and at Dutch private and public meetings, attended even by cabinet ministers, admirals and generals. It is a problem of interest to all educated classes. As early as 1911, the Dutch government appointed a committee to study and prepare the problems for the peace conference of 1915; a Dutch society brought together in print, in one volume, every thing of importance that had been written on the subject in Dutch, English, French or German; and in 1914, six weeks before the outbreak of war, the committee of 1911 submitted to

the Netherlands Foreign Office a series of proposals, some of which would certainly, at the time, have been deemed utopian. Thus, several years before the *name* of a league of nations had grown "familiar in our mouths as household words", the *problem* of a league of nations had come to be well known to Dutch readers and Dutch audiences, had been carefully investigated and had repeatedly been brought to the test of public opinion. When, in 1915, the American League to Enforce Peace began to sow its seeds, it found in Holland a well-prepared soil. Likewise, the problem was relatively old when, in November, 1917, the respected Prime Minister, Mr. Cort van der Linden, stated in the Parliament of the Netherlands that a league of nations was the only conceivable means of preserving civilization; and when, in January, 1919, the influential Burgomaster of Rotterdam, Mr. Zimmerman, amid the applause of his city council, declared that Holland would be glad to follow President Wilson's lofty flag.

There was yet another recent experience which strengthened these Dutch convictions. This was the experience of Dutch mandatory services in far-off countries. In 1897, four European powers, cooperating against Turkish misrule on the island of Crete, but distrusting each other, had chosen a Dutch officer to be temporarily the chief military administrator of the island, just as, later on, the great powers placed the police force in Morocco under a Swiss commander and that in Persia under a Swede. In 1913, when the London conference on Balkan affairs wanted disinterested army officers to act as a police force in Albania, a number of gallant Dutch officers was, upon invitation, placed at the disposal of Europe for this unselfish purpose. The report of their misfortunes and their heroic behavior deeply impressed the popular mind. In 1914, the same conference felt the need of unselfish management in a part of Asia Minor, and two general inspectors, a Norwegian and a Dutchman, the latter a distinguished member of the Dutch Indian civil service, were appointed for this difficult task. The war put an end to the work in Albania and prevented its beginning in Asia Minor. But the mandatory system itself, as a means of improving international relations, at least, if the nations chosen as man-

dataries were without national greed, had become a living thing for the Dutch nation. Holland is often supposed, perhaps with some reason, to be prosaic and materialistic, but no member of the Dutch Senate ever asked, whether it was part of Holland's duty to be her brother's keeper in the east of Europe. On the contrary, the nation felt honored in having been chosen and grateful for what it might be able to do.

Thus, the summer of 1914 found public opinion in the Netherlands, at least with the well-to-do classes, trained and educated in international thinking, still opposed to entangling alliances of the old type but prepared for international organization, clearly perceiving the need of international impartiality and ready to see the nation take its share in the international work of the future.

Yet the proof of the pudding is in the eating and only in the eating. The soundness of Holland's international policy and international opinions is put to the test by her attitude toward the Great War. Has Holland these four years stood by her old policy, or has she abandoned it for a policy of greed and opportunism?

It is well known how Holland's neutrality has repeatedly been advocated and defended abroad. (1) Poor, dear, sweet, tiny Holland, it has been said, poor Holland with her tulips, her cheese, her windmills, her wooden shoes and her country dresses (one would like to add, with her army of more than 500,000 men) was so weak and her geographic situation between the deep sea to the left and a certain devil to the right was so exposed that neutrality was her only recourse. (2) Holland having within her boundaries no iron, no copper, no saltpetre and scarcely any coal, could not, had she entered the war, have continued the manufacture of munitions—that vital element of modern warfare—after a couple of weeks. (3) The entrance of Holland into the war on the Allied side (and this was the only choice possible) would probably have given Germany a chance at once to proceed to the south of the Dutch inundation system of defense toward the Dutch seaport of Flushing, opposite England which, in German hands would have been a very pistol on England's breast, and, therefore, it might

have proved to be for the Allied nations not a benefit, but a calamity. (4) Holland, as the seat of The Hague Arbitration Court and of the Peace Palace, should try to remain a neutral shelter for pacific intercourse.

There is good reason to recognize the validity of these four arguments in favor of Holland's neutral policy. Yet that policy, though largely influenced by these practical considerations, was inspired by a deeper and more serious motive on the part of both the government and the nation. If it were believed that the war was to be an old-fashioned European war, a fight for economic profit, paramountcy and revenge, only a very small minority of the nation, whatever its sympathies, would have desired to enter it on either side. If, on the contrary, it were believed that it was to be in fact a war between justice and injustice, between goodwill and militarism, a war to urge international law upon a wrongdoer and to do so in an impartial and law-abiding manner, then only motives of a very urgent character (like those of the dark years of the Boer War) would have been Holland's excuse for not taking her part in it.

How was this dilemma to be answered in 1914? When, in August of that year, the war broke out, Holland mobilized with perfect order and celerity, within a day and a half. The unanimous expectation of the people of the Netherlands was that war would be declared on their country within a fortnight; but opinion was divided on the question, from which side the declaration of war would come, whether from Germany or from Great Britain. Overtowering all other sentiments were horror at Germany's action, aversion to Prussian methods of preparing and conducting warfare and sympathy and pity for France and Belgium. We did not then see, however, what had been the aim of Russia's policy; we were uncertain about King Edward's former diplomacy and about Great Britain's real intentions; and though we realized only too well the very great difference between Germany violating the elementary dictates of humanity, and the Entente transgressing international law in its material provisions regarding property and commerce,—ask Dutch sailors about the difference!—yet it appeared as early as August 20, 1914, by the famous Order in Council of that day,

that the Allied powers had deliberately resolved to deviate from their existing treaties. From the very beginning the Netherlands government felt it to be peculiarly its duty scrupulously to observe treaty engagements and the binding provisions of international law, which had been formulated chiefly at peace conferences held at The Hague and convoked and entertained by the Netherlands. As one of the main grievances against Germany was that she had torn up treaties as mere scraps of paper, Holland regarded it as her foremost duty vigorously to stand by the recent codification of international law, even if this law did not comply at all with her own material interests or with her own national views. To join the Allies in 1914 would have implied the tearing-up of a great many recent treaty provisions, because Holland's influence would not have been sufficient to induce the Allies to adopt new methods. Moreover, in the first years of the war the Allied nations were joined by one or two others whose disinterestedness and love of international justice seemed to the Dutch people to be open to suspicion. Strong as was Holland's sympathy with the Allied cause, this fact increased her doubt whether this war did not possess several elements of the old European struggles of hatred, ambition, jealousy and envy. If Dutch territory were attacked or Dutch sovereignty violated, the country would, immediately and without hesitation, go to war, but not before.

Were it not for this deeper motive for its neutrality, the nation's perfect unanimity would have been incomprehensible and inexplicable. The Dutch are a people of very critical temper, enjoying entire and real freedom of thought and speech and largely using this freedom for self-criticism, as almost every proposal of their government testifies. Holland's foreign policy during the war, however, has been characterized by confidence and unanimity. This is the natural result of the plain, honest, open and faithful manner in which Jonkheer Loudon, formerly Dutch Minister at Washington, conducted Holland's foreign affairs as Secretary of State from 1913 to 1918, a manner that inspired the fullest confidence in him both on the part of the Parliament (the States General) and of the nation, and which must have convinced both belligerent parties that Hol-

land's neutral policy had nothing to hide or even to disguise. But national unanimity could not have been secured, even by the best foreign minister, had not the underlying principles of the national policy proved to be sound and solid.

It cannot be gainsaid that the circumstances under which this policy had to be pursued were bitterly disappointing. Before the war, Holland had started a development of private and public international law which had to be discontinued after 1914. Before the war, moreover, many of Holland's citizens had been dreaming for several years, as has been shown, of an impartial international organization in which Holland would take her useful part, an organization bound to defend violated rights of nations against reckless and powerful law-breakers. Consequently, when war came, stamped from the beginning with violations of right, the reappearance of the old elements of European intrigue, deviation from binding treaties, lack of impartiality and unselfishness, made it seem to be Holland's duty to stand aside. Though this policy saved her from entangling alliances distasteful to the nation, adherence to it did not seem to be a soul-exalting task; and despite all she did, with warm and open heart, for numerous refugees, deserters, interned soldiers and prisoners of war, she continued to hope fervently that before long a day might dawn in which the duties of international law would wholly coincide with the dictates of the national conscience.

The light came from the Occident. Holland had already begun to regain confidence in mankind in witnessing the self-forgetful labors of the Belgian Relief Fund. The whole nation was intensely moved when, in April, 1917, America's unselfish efforts were thrown into the scales. The whole nation listened breathlessly when President Wilson repeatedly formulated his ideals for a clearer and a brighter future. Had any Dutchmen felt jealous of America on the ground that she could play a part in the war more important than that of Holland this feeling would have been largely overcome by the joyful readiness of the Dutch people to see Holland bear her share in the building-up of a new international brotherhood.

IV

For a tremendous reform such as this, awakened interest and careful study do not alone suffice. These are certainly the first indispensable stages in the development of international thought, but they are not strong enough to remove mountains; they could scarcely, indeed, remove a grain of mustard seed. In order to replace the international anarchy of the present day by international organization, it is quite necessary—as a third stage—to make the millions of mankind really and fervently wish for such a reform, to electrify the hearts and minds of the masses of the people. What Great Britain's Boer War of 1899 awakened in the Dutch nation, what Italy's Tripolitan War of 1911 failed to awaken anywhere, perhaps because the unspeakable Turk alone was its victim, the recent war awakened all over the world; and yet, without the voice and the constant exertions of the President of the United States, the effect on the millions of mankind would not have been at all what it is at the present day. Even the most violent opponents of either the President or his League of Nations should recognize this simple and undeniable truth.

Did Mr. Wilson's voice reach Holland too? Did it make her a fervent adherent of the Paris draft covenant of February and May, 1919?

President Wilson, speaking in New York on March 4, 1919, on his draft covenant, told of cries coming from the masses in European capitals in favor of "a" league of nations, of "any" league of nations—cries which the President seems to have appreciated, though he himself doubted whether the masses who were crying had any particular notion of what they were crying for. It may be attributable to the prosaic quality of the Dutch people, but it is impossible to rouse their enthusiasm for something vague and wholly indefinite. They value only such measures as can stand the test of bad times and of adversity. If one should submit to a Dutch audience the need of "a" league of nations without further definition, a few young girls, recently become members of a peace society, might applaud and possibly even weep; but the adults of both sexes

would say at once, "First tell us, please, somewhat clearly what your League of Nations means." They are much too prosaic to fall in love with an empty word, a hollow name.

Have they reason to be suspicious? A few facts will give the answer. In 1895, at Kiel, at a festive gathering of navies from all parts of the world, the Kaiser in an address expressed the wish that these united fleets might one day be permanently called upon to carry out "Europe's mission of civilization". Though this sounded like a prophecy of a league of nations, nobody in Holland doubted that, had this vague mandate been given to the combined navies of the world it would have brought about not a reign of lasting justice, but an arbitrary abuse of irresistible power. It was the same with President Taft's proposal of 1910 (in pursuance of a joint resolution of Congress), recommending to a dozen nations, of which Holland was one, a combination of navies charged with the "preservation of universal peace". It had been the same for nearly a century, during which the European Concert had lapsed into an international despotism. The reasons are obvious. In the first place, the combined powers enforced not a recognized international law, but arbitrary decisions, imposed on sovereign nations against their will and despite their protests, as when, on February 19, 1831, a famous diplomatic conference at London concerning Holland and Belgium, spoke of a thing so extremely vague as Europe's superior right "given her by social order". Furthermore, the enforcing powers were themselves interested in the issue and tried to get as much profit as possible for themselves. And then, too, the decision as to interference or non-interference was a partial one, dependent upon national egoism; the cabinets either winked at patent injustice, because it was not to their national interest to interfere, or else they meddled in things that had nothing to do with the enforcement of international justice. Holland realized that, if a new league of nations should do the same thing, if it should codify and consolidate a similar method of ruling the world, it would, under a charming *name*, cover an ugly Prussian machinery of irresistible arbitrary power. In the many discussions of problems of international organization, held in Holland between

1907 and 1914, the fear of this danger had been expressed again and again.

Where lies the liberating word? In domestic and colonial affairs nobody doubts that only impartiality and disinterestedness can expel oppression, war and fear. In international affairs, the world has worked along lines of national egoism and partiality for over four hundred years with results but too well known. In the view of the Netherlands Committee of 1911, the international solution was impartiality and disinterestedness. What are the characteristics of a scheme for lasting peace that would probably gain Holland's sympathy?

Impartiality is needed first of all in the organization of judicial and executive international boards. All of these should be entirely free from national and egoistic influences; they should, therefore, contain—as the Netherlands Committee planned for a judicial court—not representatives of special nations, but “international-minded” individuals, chosen from the citizens of any country (large or small) with a view to their personal abilities and trustworthiness in the eyes of all the nations together, and, while the great powers might receive additional votes the membership of every international board should embrace different nationalities. In other words, the members of all judicial and executive councils of a league of nations should be disengaged from national desires to as great an extent as are the members of the Supreme Court of the United States from the interests of the individual states. The Paris draft of the League of Nations provides for quite the contrary. Its Executive Council is a combination of egoistic power, a combination of representatives of nations who will be instructed by, removable by and dependent upon their respective governments, and who will bring the clashing jealousies of their governments into this council. If this combination of power succeeds, there is a real danger that, just as with the European Concert, they will look much more to their combined interests than to the provisions of the covenant.

Impartiality, furthermore, is needed to decide whether the League's international law is being violated and whether interference is, therefore, necessary. This point, on which the

Netherlands Committee laid much stress, is of great importance. Even the very strict promises in favor of Turkey in the treaty of April 15, 1856, or the promises in the North Sea entente and the Baltic entente of 1908, did not amount to anything, because it was the interested powers themselves that had to decide whether action should be taken or not. The Paris draft does not introduce any impartiality into this crucial matter. It does not entrust the vital decision to an impartial tribunal, but gives it either to the Executive Council with its nationalistic tendencies, or (in another current redaction of the same article) to the members of the League themselves.

Finally, impartiality must be secured in the manner of carrying out the League's decrees against any law-breaking nation. Nothing would prove more fatal to confidence in the League than the spectacle of international punishments stained by the greed for profit of the very nations charged with their enforcement. It was for this reason that the joint expedition of 1900 against China was preceded by very positive promises whereby the cooperating powers pledged themselves not to seek even the slightest advantage for their national interests. The Paris draft does not contain any provision of this kind.

If the Paris draft is truly defective on points so important as those above mentioned—and there are a great many more—opponents of the draft would, according to the Dutch view, do a more useful and more constructive work in pointing out its *international* defects than in laying stress on the incongruity between the draft and certain *national* traditions. For in its *international* defects lies the serious difficulty for any country, great or small, which sincerely and gladly (like the Netherlands) has given its moral support to the principle of a league of nations, and which will ere long have either to accept or to reject a definite covenant. The advocates of the League are quite right in saying that some sort of league must be organized now; its opponents are quite right in answering that everything depends upon the contents of the covenant. The advocates of a league are right in commending a certain degree of international unselfishness in the United States and every other nation; its opponents are right in answering that, if the

draft should, indeed, create merely a league of combined power, it would only codify old selfishness and jealousies and contempt for treaty provisions. The advocates of a league are right in pleading that the Monroe Doctrine and national constitutional provisions are not the main things in this tremendous worldwide reform; its opponents are right in demanding that there shall be sharply pointed out what parts of constitutions and political doctrines will be changed and what parts will be left untouched. But the latter are never right in resisting a league of nations because they believe their nation strong enough to secure its own national interests without joining in international cooperation. This was the belief of Germany, as expressed in the bold address of Colonel von Gross von Schwarzhoff, at the first Hague peace conference of 1899. Nor are they ever right in saying that they desire international peace, while at the same time opposing all steps in the direction of international organization.

The ugly feature of the dilemma is that the millions of mankind will be aware of mistakes only after it is too late. One can arouse their interest in the idea of a league of nations; President Wilson has unquestionably done much along this line. One can submit to public opinion the scope of a proposed league, its main aims, its checks and balances. But one cannot submit to the judgment of the millions the question whether certain legal provisions are adequate to the solution of the international problems which they are intended to solve. Those who are now (May, 1919) drafting the provisions of the covenant are responsible to their constituents, and heavy will their responsibility be if their draft proves to be an instrument of nationalism and greedy power rather than of peace and justice. In order to help prevent this fatal outcome, the Law Faculty of the University of Leyden proposed in February, 1919, to like faculties in Denmark, Holland, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland to formulate constructive amendments to the Paris draft in order the better to assure the objects of international justice and impartial cooperation.

V

But whence, if Dutch suggestions should prevail, would a real league of nations procure the "international-minded" judges, statesmen, military and naval officers, who are essential to its success? The present generation, educated in nationalism, will scarcely reach the broader and higher view of international politics. Internationalism must be learned and practiced. The Hague Academy of International Law, established as an international body in January, 1914, in compliance with a wish of the second peace conference, but not yet opened because of the war, has the high aim of raising the education of diplomatists, lawyers, military and naval officers and others to this new and broader plane. Holland would be glad to open the academy and to promote its endeavors.

Did the Netherlands herself set the example? Has she already had occasion to show her impartial spirit? Such a spirit would be consistent with the international traditions of the great Dutch Republic of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Dutch Republic was powerful enough to render herself redoubtable, to menace other nations, yet she never did so. She never sought aggrandizement. The spirit of militarism was alien to her, and she respected the life of other nations as she wished to see her own life respected.

During the present war, the press and public opinion in Holland have done their utmost to learn and to make known the truth on both sides, to be just not only to the Allied nations with whom they sympathized, but also to the Central Powers. Foreigners from both sides who spent some time in Holland during the war acknowledged that their sojourn had rendered their judgment more impartial because of honest information.

In January, 1918, a large group of influential Dutch representatives of commerce, industry, navigation and science established, opposite The Hague Peace Palace, an "International Intermediary Institute", in order to furnish gratuitously full information on international questions of law and economics to citizens of any country or colony. It was intended as a modest manifestation of Holland's genuine interest in the international developments of the near future.

As soon as the Paris Peace Conference had convened, several small nations made haste to present their claims and desires. But the democratic Dutch nation felt too proud, much too proud, to hold out to the conference a beggar's bowl, and its pride was supported by the profound conviction that, for the benefit of all mankind, the era of national greed and national egoism must be closed.

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